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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/639,312 08/15/00 FARIS

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EXAMINER

DUONG, T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2871

DATE MAILED:

03/28/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/639,312

Applicant(s)

FARIS

Examiner

T. DUONG

Group Art Unit

2871

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

Period for Response

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a response be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for response specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a response within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for response is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to respond within the set or extended period for response will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Status

- ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 2/23/01
- ☐ This action is **FINAL**.
- ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- ☒ Claim(s) 1-84 is/are pending in the application.
- ☐ Of the above claim(s) 8-84 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

- ☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.
- ☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.
- ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

- ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- ☐ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been
- ☐ received.
- ☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.
- ☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 1.7.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____ ☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413
- ☒ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892 ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948 ☐ Other _____

Office Action Summary

Art Unit: 2871

Applicant's election of species A, claims 2-7, in Paper No. 4 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Combination claims 39-84 were inadvertently omitted in the grouping of the last election/restriction. Combination claims 36-84 will be examined with species B.

Claims 8-84 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species or invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321© may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Art Unit: 2871

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claim 1 is rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,104,447 ('447 patent). The only difference between the claim of this application and that of the '447 patent is that the patent claim additionally recite light producing means, a light guiding structure and detailed operations of the light diffusing structure (the equivalent electro-optic panel of the instant claim). Thus, to broaden the patent claim by deleting the light source means and detailed operations of the light diffusing would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art since the light producing means is inherently associated with a backlighting panel.

Claims 1 and 2-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In claim 1, the recited feature "said electro-optical structure" lacks antecedent basis. In claim 2, the recited feature "said light producing means" lacks antecedent basis. How are the layer of electroluminescent material, the first and second transparent conducting layers, and the first and second transparent panels related with the electro-optical panel of claim 1 ?

Claims 4-6 are confusing because the recitations of these claims imply that the electro-optical panel of claim 1 and the electroluminescent panel of claim 2 are two separate elements. In claim 7, line 3, the expression "wherein said" is recited twice. The remaining claims are also rejected since they depend on the indefinite claims.

Art Unit: 2871

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.


Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Proske'952 (US 4,323,952).

Note Fig. 1 which identically discloses the claimed backlighting panel wherein during the first mode (diffusing state) the electro-optical panel 14 emits light (from the light source 12) and during the second mode (transparent state) the electro-optical panel permits light produced from an external source (ambient light) to be transmitted through the electro-optical panel without substantially scattering.

Claims 2-7 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Tai Duong at telephone number (703) 308-4873.


TVD


JAMES A. DUDEK
PRIMA[®] ...NER

03/26/01